

PEACE NEWS

No. 472 June 29, 1945 2d.

Council formed to fight conscription

THE No Conscription Council has been formed, following an influential meeting early this month of religious, political, trade union, co-operative, and pacifist workers.

It is working temporarily from 6, Endsleigh St., London, W.C.1.

The chairman is G. Maurice Hann, and the vice-chairman J. Allen Skinner—both well-known trade union figures. The hon. treasurer has not yet been appointed, but Wallace Hancock, ACIS, is financial secretary. A. Joe Brayshaw is secretary to the Council.

The Council's first meeting agreed that, while its objects included opposition to industrial conscription, military conscription was the immediate issue on which its efforts should be primarily concentrated.

Literature available

Literature is being rushed through the press and a hard-hitting free leaflet, "How to build a Nazi Britain," is now available from the Council to all who can distribute it at election meetings of all parties.

A reasoned pamphlet, "Conscription after the War?" by J. Allen Skinner, is also available at 2d. This surveys the possible reasons for conscription and exposes their falsity. It includes also reasons why Conservatives, Liberals, and Labour supporters should oppose post-war conscription.

Time is short: readers are asked to do everything possible to bring the issue of peace-time conscription before their local candidates and to write for literature to Joe Brayshaw, No Conscription Council, 6 Endsleigh St., W.C.1.

TEST FOR ELECTION PEACE-POLICIES

Do they promote freedom and security of all men?

THE vital significance for future peace "of the General Election and of the policies bearing on this country's contribution to the peace-making, which will be authorized by the British people in their votes," is emphasized in a statement issued by the executive committee of the National Peace Council on Wednesday.

The NPC is a non-party organization representing some forty national societies concerned with the problems of peace and international order.

"The second world war," says the statement, "had its immediate origin in the threat to peace of the militant fascism of Germany, Italy and Japan, but its root cause lay in the disorder of our civilization—in the failure to achieve a positive well-being for all the peoples which gave militant fascism its impulse and its opportunity."

"If the immense sacrifices and exertions of the war are not to be wasted and the peace is not to be betrayed again, that failure must be redeemed—the nations must build at home and with all their neighbours, a co-operative human society as the inescapable condition of a valid and enduring peace. And though such a society can only be progressively achieved the building of it must begin here and now."

"This is the central issue which the British people now have the opportunity and responsibility to determine."

"Are the policies—national and international—and the leadership of Great Britain, to be directed with zeal and energy to the achievement of a positive freedom and a positive security for the common man in every land? They will not be so directed unless in the next House of Commons there is a majority of men and women who have understood the fundamental meaning of the war and are alert to the essential requirements of a true peace."

"To ensure that the new Parliament is so constituted should be the cardinal aim of every voter."

GANDHI'S ELECTION HOPE

TTHIS message on the General Election from Mr. Gandhi to the Indian Freedom Campaign was read at a public meeting held by the IFC last night (Thursday) at Loughton, in Mr. Churchill's constituency:

The campaign for Indian freedom and for the freedom of the Asiatic, Negro and other exploited races of the world is one and indivisible. Victory in the west and the impending victory in the east are empty without the central fact of India's freedom.

I can hope only for victory in the British General Election for that party which works sincerely and wholly for that end.

A report of the meeting will appear in next week's Peace News.

Pacifist candidates in the field

NOMINATION Day found three pacifist candidates in the field (apart from those Labour candidates who are also pacifists):

1. Councillor J. C. DEMPSEY, a PPU member, Independent Christian candidate at KETTERING (as reported in PN on June 1);

2. AUBREY BROCKLEHURST, another PPU member, Independent Progressive candidate at ECCLES;

3. GUY ALDRED, pacifist candidate in GLASGOW CENTRAL.

More details about the last two candidates appear on page 3.

Facts about Belsen

By Quaker relief workers

THE conditions found on the liberation of Belsen concentration camp, and the reaction of ordinary Germans to the revelations, are described in reports from a team of Quaker relief workers to the London headquarters of the Friends' Relief Service.

The camp "was uncovered in peculiar circumstances," recalls the introductory report.

"It was handed over to the British under a truce arranged at the request of the German authorities, as they feared that the internees would escape and spread typhus all over the countryside. . . .

40,000 PRISONERS

"All figures are unreliable, but the camp appears to have contained about 40,000 people in the worst possible conditions of overcrowding, starvation, squalor and disease. The Army had been at work for six days before the Red Cross teams arrived."

"All the soldiers working in Camp 1 were volunteers. So moved were they by the frightful condition of the internees that they gave up their month's rations of sweets and cigarettes on their behalf, and a neighbouring unit also gave up their blankets."

"The camp consists of about a square mile of army huts, divided into three blocks. . . . It was originally intended as a camp for prisoners of war; and until January, when there was a vast influx of internees from camps further east, conditions were not so bad."

"But when the British arrived, internees were packed at about 600 per large army hut, without running water or working sanitation. They had had nothing to eat for a week; before that for two months they had had one pint of swede soup each per day; before that, for four months two pints of swede soup and a piece of bread each per day. They were dying at the rate of 600 per day of starvation and disease. Typhus was rampant."

LIKE ANIMALS

"The impression of the first to enter was of an enormous horde of people reduced to the animal level. Cannibalism was witnessed by a Major of the RAMC. . . . In some of the huts the sights, smells and sounds were beyond endurance. Everywhere was the vast concourse of scarecrow people, bodies incredibly emaciated, and faces stamped

(CONTINUED ON BACK PAGE)

New patterns in world-politics

ONE must welcome the conclusion of the agreement between the Lublin Poles and that section of the others which finds it necessary and possible to collaborate with them. A Poland of some sort is at least now possible. How far it can justly be called an "independent Poland" must be left to the future.

Undoubtedly, a very large proportion of the Polish intelligentsia will neither desire nor dare to return to the new Poland at any rate until there are much stronger guarantees of personal and political freedom than at present exist. We hope that these will be forthcoming, so that the peace of the world may not be troubled by the activities of millions of passionate Polish emigrés.

Once more we repeat that one guarantee for which western opinion still waits, and which it is within the power of the Russian Government to establish immediately, is the free access of foreign journalists to report on the new Poland. That single step, taken quickly, would do more than any other to create an atmosphere of trust.

Change towards China

LONG-TERM issues of foreign policy, it was said last week, are well concealed in the somewhat artificial controversies of the election. Yet they are by far the most important, however difficult it might be for the best instructed electorate to pronounce upon them.

The American Press restores one's sense of proportion. It reveals a

Observer's Commentary

significant change in US policy and opinion since the beginning of the San Francisco conference. It is with regard to China. All the US efforts to bring the Chinese Communists and Chungking to agreement have been dropped. Six American subjects—including journalists of some standing—who have been making propaganda for Yenan and against Chungking have been put on their trial for espionage because they used confidential State documents in their work.

Time (June 18) does what it has never done before; devotes four whole pages of its precious space to a speech on China—a very remarkable speech—made in Congress on March 15 last by Congressman Judd, of Minnesota, who spent ten years in China, up to 1938, as a medical missionary, and returned there last autumn to form his own judgment.

Opposing the Communists

THE background of his speech was this axiom: "We got into this war through Asia; and if America gets into another war it will also be through Asia." The speech itself consisted in a defence of Chiang Kai-shek and a condemnation of the Chinese Communists. Both, in my judgment, were reasoned, imaginative, detailed and convincing.

One statement has a direct bearing on the espionage trial: "A lot of the

propaganda against the Chinese Government is approved and even inspired by persons in our War and State Departments." The trial shows that the US Government has clamped down on this.

Putting things together, it seems fairly plain that in the past three months, the US Government, backed by informed opinion and now made wise to the nature of Russian policy in Eastern Europe, has come to the definite conclusion that the Chinese Communists must not be allowed to "liberate" China, if the USA can help it. Henceforward Chiang Kai-shek will be given all the support that the USA can give both in war and peace. It is (I believe) a decision of fundamental importance for the future.

The war of ideas

THAT is the background against which to set events in Europe. There the main outcome of the war is that the long struggle between the Germans and the Slavs for dominance in Eastern Europe and the Balkans has been settled in favour of the Slavs.

Whether Pan-Slavism is intrinsically superior to Pan-Germanism, I profess no opinion. If one could judge it by the Slavophil idealists, like Dostoevsky, its superiority could be admitted. Pan-Slavism as political reality is a different thing: witness the butchery in Bulgaria.

There is no more reason why the Russians should claim to absorb the Poles because they are Slavs than that the Germans should claim to absorb the Dutch because they are Germanic. But the fact is that the

(CONTINUED ON BACK PAGE)

Our appeal to electors

BY the time these words appear in print, the thoughts of all readers will be dominated by one over-riding theme, the imminent General Election. It is indeed an event of supreme importance, as we realize when we recall what happened in 1918, with all its consequences down to the present election, taking place in somewhat similar circumstances, fraught with similar dangers and opportunities but with lessons from the past to warn and guide us if we can learn them.

Recent correspondence has revealed wide divergence in the opinions and attitude of PN readers with regard to the right exercise of the pacifist vote. Whatever party or coalition is elected to parliamentary power, there are principles and policies in which we all believe, one cause which we can all support whole-heartedly and unanimously—our pacifist faith. Help us of the PPU to convert more and more of our fellow-electors to it, and with them translate it into practical politics.

We appeal below for your vote, though you will not seriously suppose that we ourselves are standing for Parliament—at least in this election! Nor are we addressing our appeal to you as candidates in the ordinary sense of the term. Nevertheless we are, not on the ballot-paper in a polling-booth, but in this small paragraph in PN which bears our names, candidates soliciting your support.

To support any good cause requires more than just putting a cross against a name, ours or anyone else's. We ask a good deal more of you than that; we want you to go to the trouble of voting and forwarding to us a special election-time contribution for the HQ Fund—as a beginning to the new life and work that lies before us and beyond the poll.

MAUD ROWNTREE
CORDER CATCHPOOL
Joint Treasurers.

Contributions to HQ Fund since June 15: £5 19s. Year's total to date: £230 1s. 8d. Donations to the fund should be sent, marked "Headquarters Fund," to the Treasurers at Dick Sheppard House, Endsleigh St., W.C.1.

PEACE NEWS

3 Blackstock Road, London, N.4
Stamford Hill 2262

All letters on other than editorial matters
should be addressed to the Manager

A CLASH OF IDEAS

GENERAL "Blood and Guts" Patton, triumphantly welcomed on his return to the USA, spoke triumphantly to an audience of children. "Whether you like it or not," he said, "you children are the soldiers and nurses of the next war." Quite a number of American soldiers have written to The Stars and Stripes vigorously protesting; but probably even those who are most deeply outraged by his statement have a glum feeling that it may prove true. Confidence in a peaceful future for mankind has seldom been at a lower ebb than it is today, at the conclusion of a victorious and futile war. Not that Gen. Patton was thinking in these ways. He is the naive militarist *par excellence*, who enjoys war, and would think the world a very poor show indeed if it were not sure of a major war twice at least in a professional soldier's lifetime.

It would not easily occur to him that major wars, being now, as they will be until a new dispensation, necessarily world-wars, are essentially huge civil wars. To these there will be no conceivable cessation save in the imposition of a world-empire or the voluntary organization of world-peace.

Rome established world-peace by means of world-empire. Though idealists may not think that an achievement worth admiration, Rome is nevertheless an enduring and glorious memory in the Western world. And some idealists who have not spent all their time looking at or for the stars have found that the Empire of the Antonines, with its tolerance and its universal law, deserves pretty high marks compared with the world in which we live. Unfortunately, we seem about to enter on a period analogous to that of the *Triumvirate*, which was the culmination of "the time of troubles." Russia, USA and Britain are the new triumvirs. It is not an encouraging analogy, if only because its speedy consummation in a world-empire seems so improbable.

The modern forces are too great for that. The Roman Empire was only a fraction of the modern world; the total energies at its disposal not one ten-thousandth of those at ours. Moreover, if another world war is to be, it will be not merely a struggle for power, but of ideas. Russia represents the urge towards monolithic world-empire; USA and Britain that towards voluntary federation. The issue between totalitarianism and democracy has not been decided by the present war, but only made more acute and palpable. Is that a conflict which is bound to result in war? Or is it one which can be resolved, first in a *modus vivendi*, and eventually by peaceful co-operation?

World-peace could be organized on either the totalitarian or the democratic idea. Can it be organized on both? That is the problem of the world-to-day. At such a time the professional soldier, or politician, who talks glibly about the inevitability of wars, however much his cynicism may appear to be justified by history, commits a crime against the human race. In the next few years the world must begin a massive movement either towards a new war, or towards increasing peace.

But we shall not move towards increasing peace by pretending that this tremendous issue between totalitarianism and democracy does not exist. It has to be recognized frankly for the potential source of appalling conflict that it is. The two halves of the modern world cannot for long live in peace by excommunicating one another. Unless there is free communication between them, mutual fears, already great, will become desperate and decisive. Nothing makes war more certain than fear and mistrust. There is so much of both in the world today that there is a chance that they may grow less. Greater they can hardly be.

Peace News is open for the expression of all points of view relevant to pacifism. Articles in it, whether signed or unsigned, do not necessarily represent the policy of the Peace Pledge Union, of which it is the weekly organ. Nor does the acceptance of advertisements imply any endorsement of, or PPU connexion with, the matter advertised.

"Pacifism of the label"

I do not expect the pacifist has ever felt so excluded from the nation as during the recent peace celebrations. Not so many men will die in the war with Japan—most people hope—as in the European war. That is all there is to say, and ultimately all there is to rejoice about.

The natural tendency for the pacifist, thus excluded from the nation at a time of popular feeling, is to examine himself, to ask wherein he has failed in the past, and how he shall act in the future. For the things we have done in the past are not possible in the future.

I am not disillusioned when saying that, for myself and many other pacifists, propaganda on the lines of the past seems futile. The days of large mass-meetings designed to secure signatures for the Dick Sheppard Pledge, loud-speaker vans and innumerable leaflets—products of the wave of enthusiasm born of a fear of war—are over. There should be a bonfire of old leaflets and pamphlets, and a peaceful demise of pacifist clichés such as "War settles nothing" and "Wars will cease when men refuse to fight," for in the contemporary world they do not apply.

Before embarking on further propaganda the Peace Pledge Union should seriously ask: "What view of life should be presented on behalf of pacifists who have passed through this war and know that merely a sentimental preference for peace is not enough?" For the pre-war propaganda of the Peace Pledge Union now makes one blush by reason of its naivete. One remembers the Round Table Conference we asked for, and our pride in the hundred thousand signatories to the Pledge, and our belief that if these were increased two-fold or three-fold there would be no war.

I WONDER whether readers who have criticised Peace News because it is nowadays "too political" remember the Peace Pledge Union as it was before the war. Do they not think that if Dick Sheppard were living today he would be the first to disclaim his creation if it had not moved beyond its original naivete? A movement is presumably a flow, and the Peace Pledge Union has now flowed far from its original source.

LETTERS

Pacifists and the General Election

SURELY your correspondents who advocate that pacifists should stand aside and refuse to use their votes at the General Election are living in cloud-cuckoo-land. There might conceivably arise a situation where a pacifist could honestly say that it was immaterial which candidate was elected, since there was nothing to choose, from the pacifist point of view, between the rival policies. But such cases must be very few indeed.

I suggest that the issue is simple. The election is inevitable; for good or ill upwards of six hundred men and women have to be chosen to guide, or at least influence the national policy. In nearly every constituency it will be possible for pacifists to say which candidate is most likely to influence policy, however slightly, in a direction favourable to the ultimate ideals of pacifism. Those candidates should obviously have our votes.

HERBERT BYARD,
18 Bloomfield Rd., Gloucester.

Letters from Peace News readers living in England and other parts of Great Britain showed how difficult it is for them to decide whether to vote or not in the coming election, and who to vote for.

Here, in Wales, the question is more easily determined. Welsh electors in the following constituencies: Caernarvon Boroughs, Caernarvonshire, Merionethshire, Neath, East Rhondda and the Welsh University—have the opportunity to vote for Welsh Nationalist candidates, whose policy is definitely pacifist, and who are not tied to the power-politics of Yalta or San Francisco.

The Welsh Nationalist Party is opposed to the present war, and a large number of its members suffered imprisonment and persecution rather than support the war.

GWILYM R. JONES,

Denbigh.

I would suggest that thought should be given to whether the present parliamentary system of the "big battalions" can be improved upon. It is unreasonable to work upon the assumption that in the complex life of today all intelligent and thinking men and women can be satisfactorily lined up behind two or three major parties. Pacifists who are parliamentarians would do well to give careful study to Proportional Representation, the Alternative Vote or other schemes whereby

It began out of a popular movement to prevent war, and ends after a war dissociated from popular feeling and activities.

The real question is not whether we are political, but whether we are on the political level of which Blake writes, where religion, morality and politics become one and indivisible. Such a level is only possible to pacifists who have attained the universal level of the artist and mystic, but it cannot be scaled by them if they limit themselves to a mere specific short cut to peace hanging on the wills of teeming millions of people outside themselves.

Pacifists will of course, all in their particular spheres, advocate short cuts to peace. For they are human, and cannot exist continually on a rarified level. Indeed, it has always seemed a mistake to me that pacifists should be confined by the label "pacifist." I know that for many pacifism is a way of life, an Alpha and Omega, but to me it is primarily a state of mind.

Men living in the complex life of today cannot be enclosed by one label or a dozen labels. Once the problem of the religious man was to reconcile his conduct on Sundays with that on week-days. Now, as conscientious objectors have learnt to their cost, it is difficult to reconcile one hour's experiences with those of the next hour. A trunk, suitably labelled, can make a fairly direct journey by rail, but not so modern man, groping with moral, religious and political values only yet half-understood.

Therefore, it seems reasonable to me that pacifists should be members of particular religious denominations, partisan socialists like myself, business men, cricketers and carpenters, whilst meeting in fellowship and bringing their individual experiences to the conception of mankind as a brotherhood which is the very pith of pacifism. The Peace Pledge Union should be a meeting-place for individuals who have rejected war and have a certain desire for humanity; it should not be a set institution claiming particular messianic short cuts to the abolition of war.

PACIFISM of the label can be stifling. Contact with life is missing sometimes, and there is an

a minority with a certain minimum support in the country could rely upon representation in Parliament.

At the present juncture, it seems to me to be a fallacy to suggest that, because one of the main political parties has an historical record and platform with little to commend it to pacifists, it follows that it is necessarily right to vote for the opposing party, unless the voter is in full sympathy with the policy of that party. The political student and thinker who does not cast a vote for any candidate may still discharge his or her duty as a citizen in other ways.

L. COLBORNE CHIPPERFIELD.

Three readers have written to assure B. Gehrke that he is not the only supporter of the Liberal Party.—Ed.

Lola Maverick Lloyd

We are collecting material for a biography of the late Lola Maverick Lloyd, peace worker and feminist who was urging world federation many years ago. She was among the founders of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom at the Hague in 1915.

I should like to ask any of your readers who have letters, pictures or special impressions of her to send them to me care of the Campaign for World Government, 166 W. Jackson, Chicago, Ill., U.S.A. If any are wanted back, state which and we shall copy and return them.

JESSIE LLOYD O'CONNOR,

1325 Clarence St., Fort Worth, Texas, U.S.A.

Invitation to Eire

This is to thank cordially all those PN readers who have written to me. And to say that sickness has so far prevented me from answering, but that I hope to be able to do so at an early date. Meantime if there are any more inquiries, they will be welcome.

DAVID JACKSON,

"Bramley," Westfield Park, Bray, Eire.

Democracy and nationalism

Owing to pressure on correspondence space and the uncertainty of letters being published, it is difficult for any controversy to reach finality, but study-groups or individuals interested in democracy or nationalism are invited to communicate with

BM/JONIB

London, W.C.1.

by **A. E. SOUTH**

and the individual pacifist

impatient desire to carry on propaganda for objectives that are undefined and cannot be realised here and now.

The hardest fact for men to learn is that the idealities cannot be propagated; but surely we have learnt it now after our experiences in relation to the hundred thousand signatories of the Pledge. To think exclusively along a given thought track, moreover, is to become a fanatic or a crank. There is the pacifism of sour milk; there can be a richer pacifism where widely differing individuals synchronize on a given level.

"Observer," who has been criticised by readers and whom I have criticised myself, has (I think) attempted to achieve the universal level of the artist or mystic. To say this is not to agree with his judgments which (to me) are sometimes wrong, but to testify to his desire to view world events disinterestedly, without permitting his own preconceived ideas to shadow his vision. If he causes offence this is only natural; for to view affairs disinterestedly usually causes offence.

I wish the "too political" critics of "Observer" would consider what they themselves could say of the world today, unless they desire to turn away from it and achieve a spiritual if not an actual monasticism. For the tendencies which "Observer" represents should be intensified within the Peace Pledge Union, not retarded. They are indeed the movement's very function.

THE pacifist must act as critic so long as power-politics obtain. He must judge power-politics in terms of morality. If, for instance, there had been no pacifists before this war it would have been unnecessary for statesmen to justify it. If all that post-war pacifism does is to keep disinterested, imaginative, critical thought alive it will have done enough; for this has been the function of celebrated minorities in all ages.

It may incidentally, however, achieve more than this. Now, more than ever, the masses rule and the individual is impotent, yet civilisation resides in the disinterested individual—not he who would enslave the masses, but he who is enslaved by them and would free both himself and them. Unless he survives through the immediate post-war years the masses will be in darkness.

By the very fact of holding the mirror to the age, asseverating the right of private judgments, post-war pacifism may help to bring the individual through, and time may indeed prove that pacifism is the new liberalism, the only possible philosophic basis for democracy and the individual man.

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An account of the 1920 strike against intervention in Russia

by **DONALD PORT**

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WORDS OF PEACE

No. 131

From the murmur and subtlety of
suspicion with which we vex one
another.

Give us rest.

Make a new beginning, and mingle
again the kindred of the nations
in the alchemy of love,
And with some finer essence of for-
bearance,

Temper our mind.

Aristophanes (written during the
Peloponnesian War, 400 BC).

GOOD START IN JERSEY

P.P.U. Headquarters and Peace
News have re-established con-
tact with PPU members—numbering
40 or 50—in Jersey, and John Gale
(“Whitcroft,” Queen’s Rd., St.
Helier) has been appointed Contact
Member.

In a letter of greeting to PN, John
Gale makes a good start by asking
for “any number of copies up to six
dozen weekly.”

Pacifists “have not a priority of common
sense and humanitarianism,” said Douglas
Owen, speaking at a Jordans conference on
June 9. “Although our withdrawal into the
shelter of pacifist company may help to
provide the detachment necessary for a true
perspective... we have perforce to return
to the plane of the man-in-the-street.”

Thirty-five people attended the conference,
organised by the Area Committee of the
PPU. James Avery Joyce, Bernard Taylor,
Dennis Davis, and Donald Port were the
other speakers.

NOTICE BOARD

P.P.U. SUMMER SCHOOL

Plans are well in hand for the Summer
School to be held at Spiceland, Devonshire,
from Sept. 15 to 22. The title for the week’s
lectures and discussions will be “Prepara-
tion for peace.” A number of well-qualified
speakers are being invited. Names, together
with lecture titles, will appear in PN later.
John Barclay can still consider a few more
applications from those wishing to attend.
Write to him at HQ.

MAURICE ROWNTREE MEMORIAL CONFERENCE CENTRE

PPU National Council decided early this
year that property suitable for use as a con-
ference and holiday centre should be pur-
chased by the Union in memory of Maurice
Rowntree.

Disappointment was experienced over an
attractive house in Surrey, which at the last
minute was unexpectedly withdrawn from
sale. But other property is being considered,
and it is hoped that an announcement of
purchase during the next few months will be
possible. Support for this important venture
will be welcomed from all who knew and
admired Maurice Rowntree and who are
similarly concerned with the creation of
peace.

“It may now be revealed that...”

C.O.s ran an “underground” paper in a London prison

By MICHAEL TIPPETT

THE Flowery was the name of the
“underground” magazine run by
conchie in Wormwood Scrubs prison
between August, 1942, and March,
1944.

The Scrubs was the natural place
for such a project. There was a
floating criminal population of nearly
800 first offenders, with a certain
number of penal servitude men en-
route to one of the penal camps,
which meant that the percentage of
wardens to prisoners was low.
(Among these PS-men I got to know
some very nice soldier fellows back
from the Middle East, some with sen-
tences up to 14 years (!), one of
whom described to me the physical
and moral sensations of seeing the
man you have shot “crumple and fall
like a flower,” and begged me to
“stick it out.”)

Part of the 800 were the group of
conchie, numbering at one time
nearly 150, which had a workshop
to themselves (“Mail Bags Two.”).
So the opportunities for communica-
tion were liberal. Only single copies
of each edition of The Flowery were
issued in prison, the precious volume
being handed from comrade to com-
rade, and generally kept under the
shirt or inside the sock.

Except for the one edition which
was destroyed by the “screw”
(warder) who found it, these single
copies were smuggled out of the
prison, and are the source for the re-
print which has now been pub-
lished.* The caricatures (by H. R.
Moir) alone make the booklet worth
the money.

★

THOUGH I was in the Scrubs in
the summer of 1943, for some
reason or other I never saw The
Flowery. I fancy I was asked for a
contribution, but was in fact rather
too much involved in the prison “poli-
tics” over the so-called orchestra: an
experience *sui generis*, and interesting
in another way. One of the editors
of The Flowery (Ernest Daniell),
writing in the CBCO Bulletin for May
says of the venture:

*By the Central Board for C.O.s, 6 Endsleigh
St., W.C.1., price 1s. 3d. (by post 1s. 4d.)

“There was a wide diversity of tempera-
ment revealed in the attitude of the C.O.s to
The Flowery. On the one hand, there were
the fellows who were too timid to accept the
paper at all for fear of being caught with it
(mostly chaps with short sentences), or too
timid to scribble down a few words on a
piece of toilet paper for insertion in the mag.
On the other hand, an artist whom I com-
missioned to design a cover would almost
make my hair stand on end by handing me a
bottle of red ink in some material when we
were surrounded by hordes of prisoners and
officers, at the same time making loud com-
ments on the whole business.”

I am not sure that timid is always
the word. (No-one, I fancy, was too
timid to help the illegal feeding of the
comrade on bread-and-water and in
solitary confinement, as punish-
ment for refusal to work, which was
going on while I was inside.)

Apart from the fact that all short-
term criminals settle down less and
hanker more continually for the out-
side (a mood which long-term men
themselves reach at the end of their
period), I think we have here the
description of two complementary
types as old as man. The real point
is that both sorts got the same
prison for fundamentally the same
conscience.

★

In one of the extracts of The
Flowery (“Another Note to First
Timers,” p. 36), there is a hint of
conchie superiority as pertaining to
the prisoner over the land-worker or
ARP comrade. In an earlier extract
(“To ‘First-Timers,’” p. 14) the true
“privilege” of the prison experience
is more justly esteemed. But the ex-
tract “Pacifists, Politics and Personal
Faith,” p. 20, which speaks with
understanding of both the “politicals”
and the “spirituals” and pleads for
mutual tolerance, is finely said and
perennially valuable to our whole
movement. Again it is worth 1s. 3d.
just to read this extract.

There is a glamour about conchie
in prison (at least afterwards!)
which is only partially good. The way
of the land-working grind may be far
harder and call on loyalty and con-
science to a greater degree. Yet im-
prisonment was a tremendous experi-
ence for most conchie, and it was a
wonderful sign that so many went
this time and so cheerfully.

June 29, 1945, PEACE NEWS—3

TRAFALGAR SQUARE DEMONSTRATION

Saturday, July 28, 2.30 p.m.

PEACE AND THE PEOPLE

(Public Action Committee of the PPU)

This meeting, to be addressed by
well-known PPU speakers, in-
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of National Council, will be our
first big post-European-war
appeal and will take place im-
mediately following the an-
nouncement of the General
Election results

LONDON AND HOME COUN-
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MORE PARTICULARS NEXT WEEK

ANTI-WAR APPEAL IN GLASGOW

From a correspondent

Guy Aldred, the well-known anti-
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will contest the Central division of
Glasgow at the General Election,
with the support of the United Peace
Campaign and United Socialist
Movement.

He has publicly challenged his four
pro-war opponents (Conservative,
Liberal, Labour, and Communist) to
defend their policies at a public
debate.

The candidate's condemnation of
non-fraternization, Vansittartism,
and military and industrial conscrip-
tion is creating considerable contro-
versy throughout the city.

Guy Aldred's election agent is:
Alex Smith, Committee Rooms, 106
George Street, Glasgow, C.1.

★

The Hon. William Douglas-Home
will not, after all, oppose the Prime
Minister at Woodford at the General
Election.

★

A PPU member, Aubrey Brocklehurst, who
is standing as Independent Progressive candi-
date in the Eccles division, is making clear
his pacifist position. He has Conservative,
Liberal, and Labour opponents.

Offers of help of all kinds will be gratefully
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Leonard A. Bird, 6 Beaufort Ave., Swinton,
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ELECTION ISSUES (Ronald Mal-
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(John Hogan); “Curing Nazi-ism”
(Fritz Gross); “Post-war tasks”
(Duke of Bedford). Illustrated
“Christian Party News-Letter,” 5d.,
30 Darby Rd., Oldbury, Birmingham.

MEETINGS, &c.

LONDON FORUM. Director Fred-
rick Lohr. Public lecture by An-
thony Elengjittam: “Faith and
Reason: St. Paul.” Mon., July 2, at
7.30. Chancery Theatre, Clareville
St., South Kensington.

FIRST STEPS Towards Peace.
Alex. Wood, D.Sc. (speaker), John
P. Fletcher (chairman) on Mon. July
16, at 7.45 p.m. at North Finchley
Baptist Church Hall, Dale Grove.

PATRICK FIGGIS speaks at Petta
Wood on “Should Pacifists Support
International Police Force?” 7.45,
Mon. July 9, 53 Greencourt Rd. 61
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PERSONAL

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'OBSERVER' CONTINUED

Pan-Slavs have beaten the Pan-Germans—not indeed in a straight fight, but partly because the Americans and the British were hammering the Pan-Germans from the other side. The Pan-German idea has lost.

One question is whether what remains of Germany will be permitted to have any idea at all to live by. Communism has ceased to be an international idea. A writer in the New Statesman (June 16) complains bitterly of "the combination of chauvinism and demagoguery that now constitutes the party line" in France. That is inevitable when Communism's western face has become Pan-Slav in Moscow. If Germany were to "go Communist" it would now have to go Pan-German all over again.

Adding to confusion

ULTIMATELY, the only rational haven for Germany is a western federation of democratic socialist States: which is, alas, very far off: indeed, unattainable so long as western Communists fight tooth and nail against it, as they are doing now.

One day their eyes will be opened, and they will realize that Russia does not need to be defended and secured by paralyzing the advance of socialism in the west. The new Russia is perfectly well able to look after herself; and any further increment of her power by such means will certainly not accrue to the advantage of the workers in the rest of Europe.

The spectacle of the clash between Britain and France over Syria is wretched enough in itself, without that of the Communists supporting the most extravagant claims of de Gaulle. This identification of the erstwhile extreme Left with a new imperialism is one of the most dangerous elements in the European confusion.

De Gaulle's tactics

ONE analogy leaps to the eye: that between de Gaulle's France and Pilsudski's Poland after the last war. Such figures and such national policies expand themselves only in a political vacuum.

The vacuum in the east after the last war was created by the defeat of Germany plus the Russian revolution; this time the vacuum in the west has been created by the defeat of Germany plus the absence of a constructive British-American policy for western Europe, whereby the extravagances of de Gaulle would have been checked from the beginning.

At present he is behaving exactly like the government of the Colonels in Poland, trying to play off Britain and Russia against one another, and merely becoming the tool of the stronger Power in the process, as Poland became the tool of Germany. Until the democratic good sense of France triumphs, and de Gaulle is, if not deposed, firmly controlled by it, he is a palpable danger to any constructive policy for Western Europe.

Set Russia an example

TO return to China and USA. The American record in China is, on the whole, a noble one, of disinterested service inspired by religious idealism: the best that a western people has to show in its dealings with an eastern one. If by American aid the Chinese Revolution can be carried through to a liberal conclusion, the balance of the world will be in favour of the values that are precious to the west.

The right way to counter Russian influence is to prove by example that there is a better way of establishing a just society in a people of peasants. If the age-old and mighty Chinese civilization can be revived by western techniques, without clamping totalitarianism upon the people or submitting them to the iniquities of unrestricted capitalist industrialism, there will be a new and inspiring future for humanism—which is in the Chinese genius. It is the future of humanism which trembles in the balance in the world today.

Progress at last?

WHETHER the British could make it a practical objective to carry out an analogous policy in India is not clear to me. The circumstances are very different: so are the resources of Britain compared to those of America.

Lord Wavell's initiative seems to me about the best that can be hoped for in a situation which does not contain many hopeful elements. A

PEACE OR SAN FRANCISCO?

Public Action Committee (PPU) has encouraged STUART MORRIS (Chairman), ROY WALKER (Secretary) and HENRY HILDITCH to express a view widely but not unanimously held within the Committee, for the expression of which the writers take all responsibility.

THERE are two distinctive approaches that pacifists may make to the United Nations Conference which has just terminated at San Francisco.

If one sees the actual choice as between unrestricted international anarchy and anarchy precariously modified by a World Security Organisation, one may feel bound to give qualified support to the latter. To do so is not to turn a blind eye to the ugly business of the veto.

But whatever is written into the Charter may perhaps be modified as years go by despite the veto on amendments, and there are some features of the organisation, such as the Economic Council, which seem capable of playing a limited but important role in improving the relations between the contracting Powers. This is a view that has already found expression in the Commentary in Peace News.

The other view is that the World Security Organisation must be judged by pacifists not simply as the only alternative to chaos, nor by its incidental amenities and potentialities but by the principles and values on which it is based and which will, we may prophesy, as surely seal the fate of the Organisation as did the fundamental tenets of the League.

WHAT are these principles and values? They include, inevitably, the very ones that dominated the Great Powers in their conduct of the war itself. Unquestioned supremacy of the Big Powers, the "realism" of military strength and material possessions; aggrandisement rather than limitation of national sovereignty; national arma-

ments under national control; treaty and balance-of-power diplomacy as before; economic regionalism; entrenched imperialism, dubbed trusteeship; exclusion of ex-enemy peoples from the comity of nations.

What has been the effect of these conceptions on the Conference itself? It has been divided into two camps, the Big Four and the Little Forty-Five. Alistair Cooke cabled the Manchester Guardian on June 19:

"This feud, now sharply drawn between the big and little Powers, can do little but end in disillusion for the little. It causes little Powers to greet with a shrugging indifference the reported 'triumphs' of the past few days. Many little nations whose delegates are jubilant for the record cannot help but privately admit that if the emerging Charter is 'the highest common denominator' attainable in San Francisco, then it is an unhappy equation of the lowest common denominator between big and little Powers—the denominator of mutual suspicion."

HOW far are the two pacifist views of San Francisco reconcilable? May we reject the seed and enjoy the fruit? If not, what are we to propose as an alternative policy, and in what sense is there a practical alternative? These are vital questions demanding unequivocal answers.

We would indeed reject the World Security Organisation, we would appeal to collective security supporters to do likewise—recognising that their own arguments for radical collective security demand the rejection of this super-nationalist wolf in sheep's clothing—and we would if we could ask the Government emerging from this Election to refuse to ratify the Charter.

We do not lightly cast away the threads of international "organisation." But we are persuaded that if popular idealism lines up behind the Security Organisation as it did in 1919 behind the League of Nations (for which the same extenuating arguments could be more cogently advanced) then the forces working for peaceful revolution in international affairs would be lulled into acquiescence once more.

The reformers, stranded on an intellectual sandbank, might plaintively propose amendments but the world

statesmen would remain deaf. The rejection of the San Francisco plan (the antithesis, by the way, of the Franciscan spirit) is the precondition of radical reconstruction in world affairs.

WHAT sort of reconstruction do we mean? Recognition, first of all, that contemporary statesmen agree in seeking to organise the world on a basis of armed force with unlimited national sovereignty for the most powerful. Rejection of that conception and of the economic nationalism that goes hand in hand with it. Realisation that what the statesmen will not do the peoples must do for themselves.

They must fraternize over the lines of demarcation and make non-sense of zones of influence. They must withdraw from their national governments the mandate, the power and the means to wage war. It is certain the people will not do this unless some nation leads the way, and equally certain that the nation must be one of the victorious Big Powers.

It is the historic mission of British pacifism to plead with the British people, to "call them out" from the vicious circle of power politics, not by compromises and amendments and buying time but by root and branch rejection of war and organised violence. That means damning San Francisco out of hand.

Yet, say the reasonable critics, surely you will fail to arouse the people; and foreseeing failure you must be more circumspect and less categorical in your rejections and acceptances. Perhaps we shall fail to win the people in our generation, indeed probably we shall so fail.

But assuredly we shall fail in our task if we do not try to win them. There is nothing circumspect about the pledge, "I renounce War." The Peace Pledge Union is dying for want of a policy as outspoken, as "unrealistic," as inspiring as that Pledge.

Germans shocked at Belsen

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

with a single expression of despair." Copies of eleven reports in all—containing enough material to fill this issue of Peace News—have been supplied to us by the Friends Relief Service. On one point only do they contain a specific contradiction of a newspaper story. It appears in this passage:

"The doctor in charge of this block, Major Smith, was nothing less than a fairy god-mother to the children. Toys—most magnificent toys—appeared in truck loads, sweets too, and later clothes. Swings and see-saws were erected on the playground, and by the way, if you saw the picture of the swings in the newspaper, they were not erected where the gallows had been; in fact no gallows have been found in the Belsen Camp."

The FRS team has now left the camp for work elsewhere.

Knowing that our readers will regard them as disinterested reporters, we publish the following passages of particular interest from their accounts:

GERMAN QUAKER PRISONERS

We have made a surprising number of Quaker contacts. . . . Rudolf Kustumeier, who was associated with the Friends International Centre in Berlin, heard that there were Quakers here and contacted us through the English officer. In 1934 he was sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment for political reasons, and has spent the last two years in concentration camps. . . . He knows Corder Catchpool and Bertha Bracey; and is anxious for all possible news of German and English Friends. He assures us that his long period of imprisonment has only served to strengthen his faith in the principles for which he has had to suffer. . . .

A French internee (a PoW who had attempted escape), spoke of the German Quakers interned in Buchenwald where he had been for some time. He said that the Commandant had offered to let them out on parole, but

cable from Suresh Vaidya reports that "the Wavell offer has signally failed to evoke popular enthusiasm." It was hardly to be expected that it would. Only a political miracle could do that in the present situation in India.

But Lord Wavell may have discovered the way to move slowly forward out of the deadlock of stagnation. If he has done that, he will have deserved well of this country—and of India.

that they had refused this privilege. Subsequently they shared the usual ill-treatment, and were considered to take their punishment almost as well as the communists. . . . (From the General Report).

GERMAN HELPERS

Recently a group of German doctors and nurses was imported to help, and were scattered throughout the various blocks. It is too early yet to report on the situation created by this move; but the reception of the Germans, has varied greatly. . . . In one house at least, the nurse was received with very little hostility by the Polish and Russian staff and the Jewish patients. She assures us that most people in Germany have no conception of what has been going on in these camps, and says that she is thankful to have the chance of working for the victims. Similar affirmations have been made by many others. . . . (From report by J. M. Parkinson).

A "WAR CRIMINAL"

The organization of the "Ambulanz" (a sort of out-patients department without a hospital) has meant contact with quite a number of people, and experience of some memorable situations. The work has been overshadowed in the past few days by the arrest of the friendly and well-liked internee doctor who has helped with great devotion from the start. . . . He is accused of war-crimes by a group of long-standing personal and political enemies. There seems no reason to suppose that there would be any effective defence if the Red Cross group were not here to collect depositions. (From report by Michael Hinton).

WHAT GERMAN SAYS

There are just a few Hitler youths amongst the labour squads—little boys of 14 or less—who are stubborn and unco-operative. But all the men who have worked for me have been very willing and co-operative, though in no way lickspittles. They are unanimous in quiet and undemonstrative condemnation of this place and seem to like the SS no better than the internees do.

Questioned about their previous knowledge of the place, they explain how no-one was allowed within hailing distance of the boundaries (it is sited within Wehrmacht manoeuvring grounds conspicuously posted with "no entry" notices), and how the moment a person was known to know anything about the place he found himself inside it. The incentive to listen to any whispered rumour, still less to follow it up with investigation, must have been slight. They admit to knowing it was there, but not what was going on there.

The local voluntary Fire Brigade has been doing a magnificent job of work in Camp 1, where the emergency water supply has depended entirely on them. Numbering only a couple of dozen men, they volunteered for work in Belsen when they first heard of its uncovering. (From report by Bill B. Broughton).

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Reviewed In This Issue

The Flowery

(1/3d.; by post 1/4d.).

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